



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT
WASHINGTON, DC 20410-3000

OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATION

Ms. Danielle McLean
MuckRock News
DEPT MR 46356
411A Highland Avenue
Somerville, MA 02144-2516

SEP - 3 2019

RE: Freedom of Information Act Request
FOIA Control No.: 18-FI-HQ-00355

Dear Ms. McLean:

This letter is in response to your Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request dated and received on December 4, 2017. You asked for copies of emails sent or received from March 3, 2017, to the date request is processed by Department of Housing and Urban Development Secretary Ben Carson that include the word "private activity bond" and/or acronym "PAB" in the subject line, body, or attachments.

Your request is granted in part. Enclosed are copies of emails, with attachments, responsive to your request. I am withholding portions of an email under Exemption 5 of the FOIA. Exemption 5 protects documents that are inter-agency or intra-agency, which would not be available by law to a party other than an agency in litigation with HUD, and are exempt from disclosure. The release of this internal information would reflect HUD's pre-decisional, deliberative process, and would discourage open and candid advice, recommendations, and exchanges of views within the Department, which could bring about public scrutiny of the individuals and the need to justify in public their tentative opinions. For your information, the internal Department email account of Secretary Carson does not use his name. This practice is consistent with that of former Secretaries and protects the privacy and security of the Secretary, allowing him to conduct official business efficiently via email. The email account names are released once they are no longer in use. The Secretary's internal email account name in current use is protected pursuant to FOIA Exemption 6, and, in such instances, requesters are advised that the withheld information consists of the email address of the Secretary. These procedures ensure that all internal emails of the Secretary released under the FOIA are identifiable as such. Please note that the Secretary maintains a separate, public-facing email address for the purpose of receiving correspondence from outside the agency.

I am the official responsible for this determination based on information provided by the Department's Office of General Counsel. You may appeal this determination within 90 days from the date of this letter. If you decide to appeal, your appeal should include copies of your original request and this response, as well as a discussion of the reasons supporting the appeal. The envelope should be plainly marked to indicate that it contains a FOIA appeal and be addressed to:

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
Attention: FOIA Appeals
Office of Ethics and Appeals Law Division
Office of General Counsel
451 Seventh Street, SW, Suite 2130
Washington, DC 20410

Telephone: (202) 708-3815

You may also submit your appeal via email to HUDFOIAappeals@hud.gov.

In addition, you may contact the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS) at the National Archives and Records Administration to inquire about the FOIA mediation services they offer. The contact information for OGIS is as follows:

Office of Government Information Services
National Archives and Records Administration
8601 Adelphi Road-OGIS
College Park, Maryland 20740-6001

Telephone: 202-741-5770; toll free at 1-877-684-6448
FAX: 202-741-5769
Email: ogis@nara.gov

For your information, your FOIA request, including your identity and any information made available, is releasable to the public under subsequent FOIA requests. In responding to these requests, the Department does not release personal information, such as home address, telephone number, or Social Security number, all of which are protected from disclosure under FOIA Exemption 6.

If you have any questions regarding your request, you may contact Eugene McGirt at (202) 402-4315. Thank you for your interest in the Department's programs and policies.

Sincerely,



Deborah R. Snowden
Chief, FOIA Branch
Office of the Executive Secretariat